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lowering a load, the loading platform 15 shown herein being a so-called fold away loading platform which can be folded together to half its length in the longitudinal direction of the vehicle, see arrow 112. In addition, a lift actuator structure 16 for the lifting and lowering of the loading platform 15 is provided. There may also be provided a tilt actuator structure 17 for tilting the loading platform for example from a horizontal to a vertical position. This may be provided for certain embodiments of the loading platform system 10 or for the purpose of slightly tilting the tip of the loading platform 15 when it is lowered onto the street surface 115 (Fig 14). If the tip of the loading platforms is disposed on the load surface 115, there is no threshold. This facilitates the movement of loads onto the loading platform 15 or the removal therefrom. Finally, the loading platform system comprises a slide unit 18, which is back and forth movable in the longitudinal direction 112 of the vehicle, see again arrow 112, on which slide unit 18 at least the support arrangement 12, the loading platform 15 and the lift actuator mechanism 16 and, if present, also the tilt actuator mechanism 17 are mounted.

Page 12, second paragraph extending to page 13:

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In the embodiment of the loading platform system 10 as shown in the figures the slide unit 18 is supported by two transverse members 19, 20, which extend essentially at a right angle with respect to the longitudinal direction of the guide elements 30, 31. The slide unit 18 is mounted to the transverse members 19, 20 by way of the legs 27, 28 and the elongated holes 29 (Fig. 2) formed therein by means of a bolt-nut connection which is not shown. At the ends 21, 22 of the transverse members 19, 20, there are end elements 23, 24. The end elements 23, 24 have a predetermined number of holes by way of which the transverse members 19, 20 and, consequently,

C₂ the slide unit 18 is mounted between the two frame members 110, 111 (Fig. 9) of a vehicle for example by means of bolt and nut connections, which provide for easy mounting of the loading platform system 10 to a vehicle 11, see Figs. 6, 8 and 9.

Page 13, second full paragraph:

C₃ As shown in Fig. 2, Fig. 3, slide elements 32, 33 are received and guided in the guide elements 30, 31 so as to be longitudinally movable in the guide elements 30, 31, which are, at the same time, support frame members.

Page 14, second paragraph:

C₄ The guide elements 30, 31 are provided with stops 45, 46 (Fig. 4) which limit the extension movement of the slide elements 32, 33 and, accordingly of the whole slide unit 18 in the slide-out direction 113 - see Fig. 1. The stops 45, 46, which essentially extend into the slide path of the slide elements 32, 33 in the guide elements 30, 31 include holes 450, 460 oriented in the longitudinal direction 112 of the vehicle. The slide elements 32 on the other hand are provided with support pins 322, 332 (Figs. 5a, 5b) having an axis extending essentially on the longitudinal vehicle direction 112. With maximum outward movement in the outward direction 113, the support pins 322, 332 extend into the respective holes 450, 460 and the support pins 322, 332 are conical in the direction of their axes that is in their longitudinal cross-sections so that a force- and form- locking connection between the support pins 322, 332 and the holes 450, 460 is established when the slide unit 18 is in its outward end position in the outward direction 113. Then the forces effective on the loading platform 15 during normal operation of the loading platform system

C4
10 are transferred, by way of the support structures 13, 14 and the slide elements 32, 33, directly to the support frame members 110, 111 forming the chassis of the vehicle 11. The slide unit, that is, essentially the guide elements 30, 31 is, or are, essentially not exposed to the torques, to which they would be subjected if the stops 45, 46 and the support pins would not be provided.

Page 15, second full paragraph:

C5
The two support structures 13, 14, see Fig. 7, are interconnectable by means of a transverse beam 35. For this purpose, the transverse beam 35 is provided at its opposite ends 36, 37 with flange webs 38, 39. With these flange webs 38, 39, which are connected to the transverse beam 35 by way of reinforcement members 43, 44, for example by welds, the transverse beam 35 is connected to the two support structures 13, 14 for example by bolt and nut connections. The transverse beam 35 provides for a rigid interconnection between the two support structures 13, 14, whereby an accurate parallel movement of the two support structures 13, 14 is achieved. It also provides a good protection against rear-ending as the transverse beam is so designed that it extends beyond the ends 130, 140 of the support structures 13, 14 remote from the slide unit 18, see Fig. 6.

Page 15, third paragraph

C6
There are provided furthermore end stops 47, 48 (Figs. 4, 14), which limit the inward movement of the slide unit in inward direction of movement 114, see Fig. 1. The end stops 47, 48 are again engaged by the slide elements 32, 33, see Fig. 14. The end stops 47, 48 can be formed by an integral tubular element and extend over the two guide elements 30, 31.
